

MINUTES
of the
PLANNING COMMITTEE
held on 6 September 2022 at 7:00pm

Present:

Councillor J A Sosin (Chair)

Councillors L Ashley, P Hughes, R J Hyland, J Lardge, R Lee,
G H J Pooley, R J Poulter, E Sampson, C Shaw and I Wright

Also present: Councillor N Chambers

1. Chair's Announcements

For the benefit of the public, the Chair explained the arrangements for the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Dobson and T Roper.

3. Declarations of Interest

All Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they knew they had in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. If the interest was a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting. Any declarations are recorded in the relevant minute below.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 9 August 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

5. Public Question Time

Several statements were made on the application at Item 6. Details are given under the relevant minute number below.

6. Land Adjacent to Broadacre, Vicarage Road, Roxwell, Chelmsford – 21/02049/FUL

The Committee considered an application for the demolition of the existing buildings on land adjacent to Broadacre, Vicarage Road, Roxwell and the construction of a workshop and ancillary store building. Permission was also sought for the widening of the existing access and alterations to landscaping. A Green Sheet of alterations and additions to the report had been circulated before the meeting.

A statement was submitted by the applicant in support of the application. The Committee also heard from two members of the public, a representative of Roxwell Parish Council and a local ward councillor, all of whom spoke against the application. Their concerns centred on the increase in the size of the buildings to be constructed on the site when compared to those for which permission had been granted in 2019 by planning permission 19/01705/FUL; the likelihood that there would be more manufacturing on the site and, accordingly, more vehicle movements; and the detrimental effect those additional vehicle movements would have on the safety of roads in the vicinity and in particular on the bend in Vicarage Road where the access to the site was located. Concerns were also expressed about the impact of the development on the Green Belt, the fact that Vicarage Road was liable to flood, and the fact that plastic products would be manufactured on the site at a time when the use of plastic was being discouraged.

In response to the points made in the statements and to questions from the Committee during its discussion of the application, officers said that:

- Plastic would not be produced on the site
- The suggestion that a tree preservation order be placed on the oak tree at the entrance to the site could be considered
- The road accident statistics for Vicarage Road obtained from police records indicated that the number of recorded accidents was not out of keeping with similar roads. The traffic count data also showed that the volume of traffic was no greater than expected for that type of road, and that speed records showed that, although it was an unrestricted road, the large majority of vehicles were not travelling at 60mph on the bend in Vicarage Road. It was acknowledged that large vehicles turning into and out of the site would need to use the full width of the road but this was not regarded as an unacceptable risk to road safety, bearing in mind that it was anticipated that there would be only one delivery to the site per day by a large HGV and that there would be only four or five people working on the site. The proposed improvements to the access and its visibility splays would provide adequate visibility for vehicles leaving the site
- The current application was comparable to that approved in 2019 in its layout, the size of the workshop and storage facility and the area of hardstanding that would be created. The access arrangements would be an improvement on those approved in 2019. It was acknowledged that the information on the Green Sheet corrected mathematical errors in the report about the relative sizes of the footprints of the buildings proposed in the 2019 and current applications

- It was also acknowledged that the ward councillor had inadvertently been informed that the current application was being recommended for refusal and that this had been a system error

Notwithstanding the view of officers that the current application was not materially larger than that proposed under the 2019 permission, the majority of members were of the opinion that the differences between the two applications meant that the current proposal would have an adverse effect on the Green Belt. On being put to the vote, a motion that the Committee was minded to refuse the application on that ground was carried.

RESOLVED that the Committee, being minded to refuse planning application 21/02049/FUL in respect of land adjacent to Broadacre, Vicarage Road, Roxwell, on the grounds that it is significantly different to the application approved in 2019 in terms of the amount of hardstanding to be created and the size of the accessway to the site, the extent of those differences making it inappropriate development in the Green Belt, defers the application to enable officers to report on the detailed reasons for refusal.

7. Planning Appeals

RESOLVED that the information on appeal decisions between 27 July and 25 August 2022 be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.09pm

Chair